(d) what steps have been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b) 3 Senior officials were occupying residential accommodation in hotels. Strict instructions have been issued to get these vacated with immediate effect.

(c) In view of lean occupancy in hotels round the year, deduction of 12½% of basic pay for such accommodation and saving of lease rent they are otherwise entitled, ITDC has not suffered loss on this account.

(d) The management has decided to charge penal/market rent for unauthorized occupation.

India as tourist destination

2413. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Business Standard on 26th October, 2001 given by the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization wherein he observed that "India as a tourism destination has been overtaken by China";

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to remove infrastructural constraints and bureaucratic delays so as to make India as the most-favoured tourist destination?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has taken various steps to make India a more attractive tourist destination. To counteract the impact of the terrorist attack on World Trade Centre in New York (USA) Govt. had announced a Seven-Point Programme. These seven points are: (i) Do not ring alarm bells too often; (ii) Propagate India as a safe and secure destination; (iii) Step-up marketing in the Western and Northern World; (iv) Break new grounds in the East and South, particularly with regard to China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and Australia; (v) Give Special boost to domestic tourism, particularly the tourism connected with pilgrimage and use the new facilities and

infrastructure created in this regard to serve as a back-bone for international tourism in times to come; (vi) Create conditions in which India attains a very great reputation for ethical trade and business practices; and (vii) Help in initiation of a great reform movement in India, a sort of new renaissance which would make India more creative and constructive and bring about a work culture of the highest class and also project India as a unique country which provides opportunities for physical invigoration, mental rejuvenation, cultural enrichment and spiritual elevation.

The Government is also stepping up efforts at promotion of India as an attractive tourist destination, *inter alia*, by

(1) Restructuring and modernisation of overseas Government of India Tourist Offices.

(2) Associating State Governments in promotion of domestic tourism.

(3) Collaborating with the private sector for promotion.

(4) Stepping up efforts at promotion in potential markets.

(5) Supporting new products, in demand in foreign market.

(6) Extensive use of Information Technology.

(7) Joint Promotions with potential tour operators, airlines, etc.

(8) Promotion of PIOs/NRIs.

Development of Rural Tourism

2414. SHRI R.P. GOENKA : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have studied the concept and potential of developing rural tourism to showcase the rural life as an economic activity for the rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the proposals/programmes drawn up, if any, in this regard; and

(c) the details of any comparative studies made with other countries especially the Western where it is widely prevalent and has now also been successfully tried in China, Indonesia, Hungary, etc.?